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Photo courtesy of Rick and Susie Graetz

Mountain West News is a  
program of the  
O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West at  
The University of Montana  
Thursday,  
Sept. 27, 2012

Produced by Shellie Nelson, MW News Editor  
Editor's notes:

In the Rockies today, another emissions deal signed in Alberta, Utah scientists find a hot geothermal spot, and Montana now has a plan for putting \$65 million to work on restoration projects in the Upper Clark Fork River basin.

In Alberta, a Canadian branch of U.S.-based Williams Cos. plans a \$500-million project to capture and process emissions from a second Fort McMurray oilsands upgrader, which will remove hundreds of thousands of tons of carbon dioxide and thousands of tons of sulfur dioxide released annually.

The company will then sell the ethane and propane also separated from the emissions, and send captured methane back to the upgrader to be burned to produce electricity.

The Utah Geological Survey's two-year project in the Black Rock Desert basin has mapped a 100-square-mile of potential geothermal resources that could be used to produce electricity.

The basin already has existing infrastructure that would cut the costs of producing and transmitting the power.

And in Montana, the state's Natural Resource Damage Program released a list of projects to be funded by the remaining \$65.5 million in that program.

Public comment will be taken on the proposed plan through Oct. 26, and Gov. Brian Schweitzer is expected to approve a final plan by the end of this year.

Today in On the Bookshelf, Barbara Theroux features four books to be released this fall.

Charlotte Gill writes about her life as a tree planter; Cat Urbigkit's book recounts her experience as a sheepherder in Western Wyoming; Steven Rinella tracks his experience as an American hunter and meat-eater; and Richard Horan details his year spent harvesting various crops across the United States.

Also contained in the column is a preview of the Montana Festival of the Book, which begins Oct. 4 in Missoula.

Quote of the day:

"It'll be just a tremendous amenity for a mountain town like Ketchum. Having something like this is in keeping with the Sun Valley thing and the Idaho thing since Idaho is the whitewater state of the U.S."

Jeff Smull, about Ketchum's \$2.7-million master plan to build a whitewater park on Idaho's Big Wood River.

- Twin Falls Times-News

Rockies today

Montana releases final plan for Clark Fork River watershed funds

The Montana Department of Justice's Natural Resource Damage Program released its proposal on distribution of the remaining \$65.5 million in the fund for restoration of the Upper Clark Fork River basin, with \$45.6 million allocated to aquatic projects and \$19.9 million for terrestrial work.

Missoulian; September 27

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Idaho city approves \$2.7M plan for whitewater park in Big Wood River

The Ketchum City Council approved a \$2.7 million plan to build a whitewater park on a 1,500-foot-stretch of the Big Wood River near Hulen Meadows just north of the Idaho city.

Twin Falls Times-News; September 27

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Williams Cos. to capture, process emissions at second Alberta oilsands upgrader

Oklahoma-based William Cos.' Canadian branch has signed a second deal to capture and process emissions from a Fort McMurray oilsands upgrading company in Alberta that will reduce annual emissions of carbon dioxide by about 200,000 tons and sulfur dioxide by about 2,000 tons.

Calgary Herald; September 27

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USGS test of Wyoming groundwater finds lower level of benzene

The U.S. Geological Survey released the results of its tests of water from one groundwater monitoring well near Pavillion and found that benzene levels in that Wyoming well were lower than found by the Environmental Protection Agency's previous test, but the USGS was unable to test the second well due to low water levels.

Billings Gazette (AP); September 27

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Scientists find hotspot of geothermal energy in Utah desert

Utah Geological Survey scientists have been probing Black Rock Desert basin south of Delta for two years and they said exploratory wells have found a 100-square-mile area within that basin that would support a geothermal power plant.

Salt Lake Tribune; September 27

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#### Wyoming producers optimistic about uranium market

After the March 2011 nuclear disaster in Japan, uranium prices went on a wild ride, but the price is now holding steady at around \$50 a pound, and with more nuclear reactors under construction globally, Wyoming producers are optimistic about future prices. Casper Star-Tribune; September 27

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#### In Wyoming, uranium miners, wind developers and ranchers share land

Uranium producers in Wyoming, such as Cameco Resources and Crosshair Energy, work with ranchers and wind developers, as well as oil and gas companies, as the uranium they produce underlies lands on which wind farms and ranchers, as well as drilling operations, sit.

Casper Star-Tribune; September 27

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#### USPS to close W. Montana mail processing center by March

The U.S. Postal Service announced Wednesday that it will close its Kalispell mail-processing center and move those operations to Missoula, resulting in a net loss of eight jobs in western Montana.

Kalispell Daily InterLake; September 27

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#### Opinion

##### Seesawing subsidies shackle solar, wind power development

The Congressional Budget Office reports that, between 1916 and 2007, two-thirds of government incentives for energy production went to oil and gas companies, most of which are permanent, while since 2007, the incentives to promote wind, solar and other renewable sources of energy have come with a sunset date, which is why progress on development of these resources has not been consistent.

High Country News; September 27

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#### Beyond the region

##### U.S. wades into Canada's fray over CNOOC-Nexen deal

Nexen owns shares of four offshore drilling leases in the Gulf of Mexico, which would be transferred to CNOOC Ltd, a China-owned company, under a pending \$15.1-billion deal, and some prominent federal lawmakers in the U.S. are protesting that aspect of the deal because they don't want China operating that close to the U.S. and because those leases were issued in the mid-1990s as royalty-free.

Toronto Globe and Mail; September 27

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#### Arizona ski resort prepared to make snow with treated wastewater

Arizona Snowbowl will be the first in the world to use 100 percent treated wastewater to make snow, although Native Americans, who have fought a decade to keep that from happening on a site they consider sacred, said they're not done fighting yet. New York Times; September 27

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#### Economy:

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Community:

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Environment:

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A Look Ahead

#### A Look Ahead

Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent's Third Annual Conference: Pathways to Prosperity: Caring for Communities in the Crown of the Continent, Fernie, B.C.

#### On the Bookshelf

Barbara Theroux of Fact & Fiction reviews four new Fall releases for your reading pleasure

#### Mountain West Perspectives

Conflicting perspectives about returning wild bison to areas of Montana where they used to roam aren't mutually exclusive

#### Mountain West Voices

Hear the stories of the Mountain West:

9/19/2012: EATING AT THE CALF-A

8/29/2012: Gigging Around

8/15/2012: Names on the Map: Dry Land Homestead Communities of Teton County, Montana

8/8/2012: Homesteaders and Hired Men

8/1/2012: The Ferrywoman

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